



BOKU University's

Strategy for Internationalization 2015 - 2025

Foreword by the Rector

University development today has to take into account the international context. We face a global competition for the best scientists and the best students. BOKU is a leading university in Life Sciences and aims to be a globally active university, with a clear focus on its strengths and core competences. International recruiting of faculty members and of students is a basis for the future development of BOKU. Strong international partners guarantee further options in developing joint curricula, exchange of students and faculty and development of co-operative research programs. To bolster further the internationalization process, fostering quality management and development of international university networks are important core activities for the future.

From the BOKU Mission Statement:

“The BOKU professes to being an international performer in research and teaching, cooperating across national and international borders, and initiating open-mindedness towards new developments.”

BOKU is the most important Austrian resource for research for development (experts, teaching and research); it is also to become the first point of reference for relevant international and Austrian organizations in this field by 2025. A key aspect of the identity of the University of Natural Resources and Life Sciences, Vienna is its own development research strategy and is the only Austrian university with an organizational unit specialized in this area: the Centre for Development Research.

The activities of BOKU in non-OECD countries and in the primary focus regions with regard to the strategy for the internationalization of BOKU are to be continued at the current level and intensified, if possible; first, to underpin the importance of BOKU's collaborations in the area of Research for Development and second, as a support measure.

An interdisciplinary approach is contemplated as a priority and realized more strongly within BOKU. Quality standards for co-operation networks are developed. An interdisciplinary international Alumni-Network is developed and used in the long run for fundraising purposes.

BOKU is committed to international university benchmarking in teaching and research, to collaborations across boundaries and to a proactive openness towards new social, economic, political and sustainable developments.



University's international ambition

To be, within its area of expertise, the first point of reference in Austria for international education, research, innovation and development, and to be ranked within the top leading international Life Science universities.

University Mission Statement for internationalization

BOKU is committed to engagement in education, research, innovation and development beyond its national boundaries, in its region and globally

BOKU will fulfil this Mission by focusing on the following goals

- Increase in both incoming and outgoing student mobility in order to accelerate the internationalization of the university.
- Continuation of "Internationalization at Home" meaning increased teaching staff mobility, the offering of international and interdisciplinary study programs as well as measures to improve the "international classroom" (e.g. by offering intercultural training to students and staff). (This should reflect the fact that not every student is interested in or able to study abroad.)
- In order to take better advantage of synergies in the areas of both teaching and continuing education, as well as research, the development of international cooperation networks with both European and non-European states (especially in the field of development assistance) should be strengthened. Attention should be paid primarily to interdisciplinary approaches, and also be implemented to a greater extent within BOKU itself. BOKU's involvement in cross-disciplinary networks (EUA, EUCEN, Euroleague for Life Sciences (ELLS); ICA, IROICA, AGRINATURA) should be continued and taken forward. BOKU has established a Central Europe network in 2010 (CASEE) as a regional sub-group of the ICA.
- BOKU cooperates with international organizations with offices in Vienna (e.g. IIASA, UN) in terms of teaching (guest teachers at BOKU, student visits and internships) and research (topics of theses and dissertations, joint projects). In principle, this should begin with research cooperation and be followed by teaching activities.
- International alumni and alumni in international organizations are key individuals for BOKU's internationalization strategy and contact points in these international networks. International, cross-disciplinary alumni networks are given a central role within BOKU; the same is true for the international, cross-disciplinary alumni network.

Core Objectives

Learning and Teaching

Foreword by the Vice-Rector for Teaching and International Affairs

Our vision is to be a leading, attractive international university, as international recognized partner for students and researchers as teachers from all over the world; in order to train a new generation of decision-makers in sustainable development. International mobility among researchers and students is a driving force in higher education for information exchange, critical thinking interaction and dialogue between lecturers and students, necessary to meet the challenges of the 21st century. BOKU wishes to strengthen its position by strongly supporting "internationalization at home" and "cross-border" to bring forward international talent development and knowledge exchange. Increased efforts to implement international curricula and Joint-study programs set up with partner Universities underpin the internationalization strategy of BOKU

As teaching is contextually close to research, the international aspects of the strategic plans for teaching and learning are oriented towards the key areas of research.

Statement on the status of the university in terms of the internationalization of learning and teaching

The high level of international cooperation of BOKU academics is also reflected in the curricula offered: 11 international master's programs, including 3 Joint and 8 double degree programs, which are offered partially or entirely in English, as well as 3 additional BOKU Master programs offered in English, a high proportion of foreign students in degree programs (including over a third from non-EU states) and a high level of student mobility provide evidence of this.

Objectives

- With regard to outgoing student mobility we strive to meet and exceed the goal that at least 55 % of all BOKU graduates (based on graduate numbers of 2014) will have spent some time abroad as part of the studies by 2025
- Increase in the proportion of international students to 25% of the Bachelor and Master graduates number and 35% at Doctoral level alumni by 2025. In particular students from the primary focus regions as set out in the strategy for the internationalization of BOKU as well as from non-OECD countries are to be attracted to study at BOKU
- Strengthen interdisciplinary and transdisciplinary courses addressing sustainability transitions with regard to the management of renewable natural resources, world agriculture, and food systems.



- Implementation of measures to increase student mobility with Bachelor Curricula designed to facilitate mobility and to ensure recognition by BOKU; e.g. for internship mobility. Successful implementation of ECTS (European Credit Transfer System). Once the required technical changes and staff increase have taken place, additional information will be included in the Diploma Supplement.
- Increase in and structured expansion of the classes taught in English in the master's programs
- Expansion of classes taught in English within the framework of doctoral programs, particularly for "Doktoratskollegs"
- In non-OECD countries and in the focus regions, BOKU is to be more actively involved in teaching, or win BOKU students from non-OECD countries/focus regions
- Increase in the number of international guest teachers (= guest lecturers and guest professors) - in the middle run on the level of Bachelor degree programs 2 ECTS in each study program are intended to be held by guest teachers and on the level of Master degree programs it should be 4 ECTS in each study program.
- Development of foreign language, international and interdisciplinary study programs (e.g. Joint- or (only in cases where the national law does not allow to issue Joint Degrees:) Double/Multiple-Degree programs), e.g. in the framework of the ERASMUS+ or H2020 MSCA-ITN-programs. In the middle run the goal is to develop foreign-language specification possibilities (in accordance with the target group) in cooperation with several universities for every Master degree subject area. In the long run these specification possibilities should be extended after respective evaluations have been carried out and taking the degrees for international Master degree programs into consideration. Co-operation with enterprises is to be encouraged in both regular and continuing education.
- Development of international continuing education courses which are geared to the competence fields, such as Summer Universities, specific short courses on-site (for example organized via the Centre for Development Research), but also specific additional offers for university alumni. These have to be held on a regular basis and need to be marketed internationally. Quality standards for continuing education have to be developed together with incentives for the providers of advanced vocational training and used as a basis in determining guidelines for the number of continuing education programs that have to be developed.

Targets and performance standards with defined dates for achievement (Testable)

No.	Goal(s)	Indicator	Value2014	Target value		
				2016	2017	2018
1.	Student mobility	Number of joint curricula with compulsory study-abroad periods	8	9	9	10
2	Teaching staff mobility	Increase of outgoing lecturers according to the definitions of the "Wissensbilanz"	25	25	28	30

No.	Goal(s)	– Indicator	To be achieved by
3	<p>Advancement of double degree and joint study programs, e.g. within EUROLEAGUE</p> <p>Supporting the increase in the number of courses conducted in English and the development of doctoral programs</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • transformation of current double in joint degrees, wherever the laws and partner university regulations allow to do so; as well as further development of current international studies • Co-operation with strategic partner institutions to combine leading experts world-wide and use the strategic strengths of each institution to develop academically highly competitive study programs • Further Development of courses in English for doctoral programs • English Coaching for academic staff 	<p>2020</p> <p>2025</p> <p>2018</p> <p>2025</p>
4	<p>Increase in Student mobility (Outgoing and Incoming)</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • all BOKU graduates will have spent some time abroad as part of the studies • Feasibility study to offer intercultural training jointly for both outgoing and incoming students • Feasibility study to implement Mobility Windows in BOKU curricula • Feasibility study to promote students' participation in international conferences • Establishment of a working group to develop a concept for increasing the foreign language knowledge of students • Involvement of Incoming students in QA procedures (e.g. Student representatives for Master programs) • Increase in the proportion of international students to 25% of the Bachelor and Master graduates and 35% of the Doctoral level alumni. In particular students from the 	<p>2020</p> <p>2017</p> <p>2016</p> <p>2016</p> <p>2015/16</p> <p>2017</p> <p>2025</p>

		<p><i>primary focus regions as set out in the strategy for the internationalization of BOKU as well as from non-OECD countries are to be attracted to study at BOKU</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>Increase in e-learning offers (OER), also for continuing education</i> • <i>Establishment of a working group developing a BOKU strategy for new teaching and learning methods</i> 	<p>2018</p> <p>2016</p>
5	<i>Diploma Supplement adaptation</i>	<i>Provision of technical and personnel requirements for DS adaptation (perhaps even EU Label)</i>	2025
6	<i>Cooperation with the Vienna offices of international organizations (UN, IIASA...) and enterprises</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>Further co-operation in teaching (e.g. visiting lecturers, excursions, internships) and research (e.g., by means of dissertation or master's thesis topics and joint research projects).</i> • <i>Co-operation with enterprises also in the framework of thesis supervision, Knowledge Alliance Projects in ERASMUS+ and MSCA-ITNs in H2020</i> 	<p>2020</p> <p>2020</p>

Implementation plan (see separate document)

Research, Innovation and Development

Foreword by the Vice-rector Research and International Research Collaboration

Our vision is to be recognized as one of the leading European Life Sciences Universities performing cutting-edge research in order to address globally as well as regionally significant research problems within its fields of competencies. Our core strategic goals focus on:

Young Scientists & Recruiting

- Attracting and recruiting international top scientists, excellent doctoral candidates and encouraging academic exchange to further develop a high-quality research profile
- Further development and implementation of internationally oriented doctoral study programs

Research for Development, Capacity Building



- Recognition of our social responsibility by conducting development research and education for developing countries in areas related to sustainable natural resource management
- Contributing to capacity-building in research, innovation and education with special emphasis on the Danube Region and Non-OECD countries
- Strengthening the interdisciplinary collaboration in Global Development Research across departments and thematic areas.

International Cooperation & Visibility

- Active participation of BOKU researchers in international conferences and hosting an increasing number of international conferences at BOKU to further increase the international visibility and scientific profile of BOKU
- Encouraging the involvement of BOKU scientists in activities of the international scientific community
- Stimulating international cooperative research projects and programs by networking with European and international partners

ERA – European Research Area

- Maintaining strategic contacts with ERA-Representatives
- Increasing visibility of BOKU's ERA-Activities
- Addressing European Research Funds (e.g. H2020, COST, EFSA)

Societal Responsibility

- Through its Smart Specialization Strategy BOKU – together with its international and European partner institutions and university networks - is contributing to capacity-building in research, innovation and higher education with special emphasis on geographic target regions, in particular the Danube Region and Non-OECD countries
- BOKU is committed to the principles of sustainability and continues to stimulate and carry out research supporting sustainable development

A strengthened **internationalization of research** is closely linked with an excellent quality of research (performance).

Objectives

Young Scientists, Recruiting

- Maintaining HR Excellence Logo of European Commission
- Strengthened integration of foreign doctoral and post-doc students in current research projects

Research for Development, Capacity Building

- Intensifying R4D-Activities (e.g. projects funded through CO₂-compensation scheme)
- Strengthened international co-operation and exchange of scientists
- improved mobility of scientists

International Cooperation & Visibility

- Strengthened international co-operation and exchange of scientists
- Improved mobility of scientists
- Better use of sabbaticals
- Easier access to BOKU travel funds.
In this context, it is essential to establish mobility in the framework of the EU programs, the FFG, FWF (Lise Meitner, Erwin Schrödinger) and the ÖAW (APART etc.) as well as similar national and international programs serving internationalization. International contacts have to be facilitated for post-doc exchange (incoming and outgoing Marie-Curie-Fellows). In this area, no exact figures should be stated, but the goal is to raise awareness of these possibilities and to increase the mobility (compared to the level obtained in 2010).
- Improved support at project initiation and application in the area of international research programs (H2020, COST, etc.)
- Internationalization of research support staff (staff exchange, participation in European networks of research support staff)

ERA- European Research Area

- Annual visits to European institutions in Brussels, workshops with representatives of the EC, EP, etc.
- Active participation of BOKU researchers in European committees & networks (e.g. focus groups, JPIs, PPP Biobased Industries, ...)
- Establishment of an “ERA-Working Group” to make better strategic use of knowledge gathered in European committees & networks

Targets and performance standards with defined dates for achievement (Testable)

No.	Goal(s)	Indicator	Value2014	Target value		
				2016	2017	2018
1	BOKU's involvement in international academic networks	Number of networks in which BOKU is participating	13	14	15	15
2	Collaboration with International Organizations	Number of collaboration agreements with international organizations	1	2	2	2

No.	Goal(s)	– Indicator	To be achieved by
3	<p>Activities of BOKU in non-OECD countries</p> <p>Develop BOKU partnership networks with non-European countries (in particular in the area of development cooperation).</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> – Presentation of Global Development Research Strategy in the primary focus regions; e.g. increase in the number of projects available for CO2-compensation – Information about current BOKU activities in the regions ; e.g. at “Tropentag” 2016 in Vienna – Co-operation with BOKU’s International Alumni in non-OECD countries to promote activities – Institutionalization of “Emergency Plan information sessions and intercultural training” for mobile staff and students – Increase BOKU’s visibility through participation in relevant rankings and development of professional English information material – Additional partnership projects e.g. in the framework of APPEAR – Intensified co-operation with the international BOKU Alumni network (e.g. “Kamingespräche”) 	<p>2016</p> <p>2016</p> <p>2018</p> <p>2016</p> <p>2018</p> <p>2020</p> <p>2016</p>
4	<p>BOKU’s commitment in interdisciplinary networks (EUA, EUCEN, ELLS, ICA, CASEE; IROICA, AGRINATURA, DRC; ASEA-Uninet, EURASIA PACIFIC UNINET, DRC, Academia Danubiana) but also in specific networks (</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Annual attendance of meetings and conferences • active role in some networks (ICA, CASEE, ...) • Feasibility study to reactivate the “Academia Danubiana Network” • Membership and active participation in the Global Challenges University Alliance (GCUA) 	<p>2015 - 2025</p> <p>2015</p> <p>2016</p> <p>2016-2018</p>

	<i>EPSO, ISEKI, Oenoviti etc.) will be continued</i>		
5	<i>ERA-Activities</i>	• <i>Establishment of "ERA Working Group"</i>	<i>2025</i>

Implementation plan (see separate document)

People

Foreword by the Vice-Rector for Strategic Development

Our vision is to be an attractive place to study and to work – BOKU professes to being an open-minded, interculturally sensitive university that values diversity and provides the best study and working conditions for its students and employers, irrespective of their nationality.

Objectives we shall:

- Introduce English as the second internal BOKU working language: this means that documents and applications are accepted, processed and answered in English. English skills are a precondition for appointment to an academic post at BOKU.
- When appointing administrative personnel, priority is given to those with knowledge of English; corresponding continuing education courses should be expanded. BOKU graduates should be able to work in at least two languages and when possible also have knowledge of a third language.
- Targets in relation to academic and administrative personnel: experience abroad for academic personnel in their specialist field should be supported. For this, leaves of absence should be encouraged and the sabbaticals envisaged in the collective contract (Kollektivvertrag) should also be made use of. Administrative personnel should also be enabled to spend work-related time abroad.
- In the long run, measures for supporting internationally active BOKU staff members should be identified



Finance

Foreword by the Vice-Rector for Finances

Our vision is to provide the infrastructure and possibilities to enable all our students and staff to co-operate with international partner institutions – either by “Internationalization at home” (which means fostering incoming teaching staff mobility or virtual mobility) or by student or staff mobility.

Objectives we shall:

In view of the current financial situation of Austrian universities, it has to be seen already as a success if BOKU manages to maintain the actual level of activities. However, of course it is BOKU's objective, in the framework of the financial possibilities given, to fulfil all the objectives stated in this strategy document.

Although there is an “international budget” for financing study abroad scholarships and teaching staff mobility with overseas partner universities (incoming and outgoing), the full implementation of the goals of the internationalization strategy cannot be financed exclusively by university-internal funds. Fundraising for scholarships, language courses and similar “international” activities is thus essential for maintaining and expanding BOKU's international activities.

APPENDIX

Environmental Analysis

Our perspective – BOKU as an international university

The geo-political situation of BOKU as well as its strong subject specialization, require the definition and focusing of its external interests. BOKU has taken this into account through the formulation of an internationalization strategy.

BOKU is the most important Austrian resource for research for development (experts, teaching and research); it is also to become the first point of reference for relevant international and Austrian organizations in this field by 2020. A key aspect of the identity of the University of Natural Resources and Life Sciences, Vienna is its own development cooperation strategy.

The classic international mechanisms comprised communication and co-operation of individuals, work groups and institutes. They retain their worth, although co-operation on an institutional basis has increased and the development of networks in research, teaching and continuing education is gradually replacing and removing them. Mental



and physical mobility of students, university lecturers, exchanges and multilateral recognition of studies or parts of them are becoming more important.

In 1998, BOKU became one of the first Austrian universities to develop an Internationalization Strategy. Its actual implementation was evaluated through external, international experts in 2001. The results proved that some objectives were successfully achieved, where others have to be reached yet. Thus the original strategy had to be reviewed and re-formulated. The new Austrian university law also made it necessary to adopt a strategy of quantifiable goals and performance indicators. In terms of a continuous evaluation process revision second external audit of BOKU's internationalization strategy was carried out in 2009 and led to another revision of the strategy.

In 2014, a Quality Audit assessed BOKU's quality assurance activities – among others, with a special focus on QA in internationalization. The external experts recognized the high standard of QA measures taken in BOKU's international activities, and therefore BOKU got the QA label until 2021.

BOKU is committed to international performance comparisons for research and teaching, to cooperation across national boundaries and to openness to new developments.

External pressures and Policy issues

In assorted publications, in particular the European Strategy for Higher Education 2010, the merits of internationalization and its elements are emphasized. We are convinced that the relatively small size of our country and our geo-political situation are exceptional reasons to be more active beyond our national borders.

Governance and management

International affairs at BOKU are the responsibility, at the management level, of the Rectorate, supported by the Committee for Internationalization. The ZIB (Centre for International Relations) is responsible for the operational implementation and day-to-day administration of international cooperation, as well as the coordination of BOKU's language courses. The administrative activities of the ZIB are complemented by those of the coordinators within the departments responsible for each partnership or ERASMUS+ agreement (who will provide subject-specific support for the cooperation), the members of the Scholarship Nomination Council [Auslandsbeirat] who allocate BOKU's scholarships, the country coordinators (LänderkoordinatorInnen) acting as contact persons in BOKU's geographic focus areas of the Internationalization strategy, the Program coordinators of BOKU's international Master programs, and the international contact persons of each department.

Attention has to be paid to the fact that the university structure serves the process of internationalization and that this has positive effects on future evaluation regulations. The acknowledgement of the international administrative function is essential. This



holds especially true for the mid-level faculty that amongst other things has been and is essential for the carrying out of exchange programs in the form of departmental coordinators. This should be evaluated positively in the individual-related evaluation and also needs to be implemented in the objectives of the departments.

Decisive for the successful implementation of this strategy for internationalization is the involvement of all university units in the internationalization process. If internationalization is not to be confined purely to external activities such as increasing student mobility, a general change of outlook in the university's focus on international exchange of knowledge and experience must be appropriately managed in order to upgrade the quality of the university's own spheres of activity. This in turn requires corresponding action by management if such internationalization is to succeed university-wide. It must, therefore, be among the targets of the university to implement training in foreign languages and in the sphere of intercultural communication for both scientific and administrative staff. This is essential if the required open-mindedness necessary for establishing internationally-oriented studies and research is to be guaranteed.

The successful realization of an international strategy calls for basic structural requirements. These comprise :

- A functional organizational unit which is responsible for the co-ordination of international activities at the university
- A committee which decides the detailed measures in connection with the preparation of the implementation and most importantly
- A university administration which carries the ultimate responsibility for the internationalization of the university, and acts to implement the international strategy.

Timeline and Goals in the area of international orientation and mobility

Targets and performance standards with defined dates for achievement (Testable)

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4	<p>Increase in Student mobility (Outgoing and Incoming)</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • all BOKU graduates will have spent some time abroad as part of the studies - Feasibility study to offer intercultural training jointly for both outgoing and incoming students - Feasibility study to implement Mobility Windows in BOKU curricula - Feasibility study to promote students' participation in international conferences - Establishment of a working group to develop a concept for increasing the foreign language knowledge of students - Involvement of Incoming students in QA procedures (e.g. Student representatives for Master programs) - Increase in the proportion of international students to 25% of the Bachelor and Master graduates and 35% of the Doctoral level alumni. In particular students from the primary 	<p>2020</p> <p>2017</p> <p>2016</p> <p>2016</p> <p>2015/16</p> <p>2017</p> <p>2025</p>

		<p><i>focus regions as set out in the strategy for the internationalization of BOKU as well as from non-OECD countries are to be attracted to study at BOKU</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - <i>Increase in e-learning offers (OER), also for continuing education</i> - <i>Establishment of a working group developing a BOKU strategy for new teaching and learning methods</i> 	<p>2018</p> <p>2016</p>
5	<i>Diploma Supplement adaptation</i>	<i>Provision of technical and personnel requirements for DS adaptation (perhaps even EU Label)</i>	2025
6	<i>Cooperation with the Vienna offices of international organizations (UN, IIASA...) and enterprises</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>Further co-operation in teaching (e.g. visiting lecturers, excursions, internships) and research (e.g., by means of dissertation or master's thesis topics and joint research projects).</i> • <i>Co-operation with enterprises also in the framework of thesis' supervision, Knowledge Alliance Projects in ERASMUS+ and MSCA-ITNs in H2020</i> 	<p>2020</p> <p>2020</p>

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	<i>networks (EPSO, ISEKI, Oenoviti etc.) will be continued</i>		
5	<i>ERA-Activities</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><i>Establishment of "ERA Working Group"</i>	2025

Implementation plan (will be presented a separate document)